

## PURPLE FRINGED ORCHID.

add, my orchid, if I make a doll  
of words, wood mirrors of dark speech  
with a purple "Love" alone alight.  
from all of glowing melody  
leads through glimmering leafage of grave  
thought.  
one rose blossom in the dusk;  
orchid, if I shut you in my heart,  
rob the hemlock twilight of its star,  
some note but lovers find, and who finds none  
lovers, since the time and long before  
Charles's foot upon the mossy moss  
and you contemptuous, as the mo  
passing idly notes and nothing  
orchid, if I give your scent a voice  
age as the sphinx's riddle, how your dower  
human and inhuman, part of man  
infinitely apart from man, who plucks,  
cannot take your beauty when he goes,  
brought your beauty with him when he  
came.  
orchid, purple cloud of winged stars,  
purple ovals and sweetness of the dark  
in habit this the dust of speech  
rise up living at its somber heart  
and thy monody with a rose "Love!"  
all made of grace and fantasy,  
all made of fragrance and of purple air;  
all made of death for life to be;  
and it who can, and how he finds beware,  
Joseph Russell Taylor in Scribner's Magazine.

## MELINDA'S WEDDING.

When Melinda Wiggins got engaged  
Pelig Jenkins, her ma was just tickled  
death. Beans was scarce down to  
unkinville, for none of the young men  
all stay arter they was groved up.  
sides. Pelig is real forehanded and  
like a catch.  
His ma was sot ag'in his marryin at  
and Melinda she wouldn't never  
caught him ef she hadn't took airly  
grin walks 'bout the time he went  
to his place of business and met  
as ef by accident.

I am told that he proposed by Tag-  
g's barn and was excepted in front  
the shoemaker's and gave Melinda  
engagement ring jest this side of  
blacksmith's.

Well, Mrs. Wiggins she was real sot  
about it, and she said that Melinda  
could be dressed up as much as any  
side there ever had been in Punkin-  
le, ef not a leetle better. But Mr.  
Wiggins, Melinda's pa, he come of a  
pse family, and he was near himself—  
us his nater to be—and when Melin-  
a ma asked him fur money to shop  
for the things he jest buttoned up his  
ockets and said, "Naw." He ollers  
nouncement no that way when he was  
it. "Naw," sez he, "I ain't tolled and  
ollered forty odd year fur to let my  
oney be spent like water. You kin  
ake a list out of what is wanted, and  
I get it."

Well, when he spoke up like that Mrs.  
Wiggins she knew 'twasn't no good  
kin, so she said, "Praps you air  
ht pa," and she wrote down some  
ings and kinder winked acrost to Me-  
y, who was beginning to cry at the  
of her pa, that didn't know coker  
blankets, a doosin, he

help saw all that and beered  
at was said and nat'rally told folks.  
Well, that afternoon Mr. Wiggins  
nt to town to sell his potatoes and  
the money and come down on the  
at as usual.

The boat landin is in quite a lonesome  
ce, and he went home by a sort of  
path anyways, and just about dusk  
Browns heard a howlin in the pic-  
woods and, goin to see what it was,  
re was old Wiggins tied to a tree.

He told 'em he'd been beset by rob-  
bers and that they was so fierce and  
ous he'd been obliged to give 'em  
y cent be had. He described 'em  
most outlandish critters. He said  
hair was like cotton wool and  
faces black. Their hats was tied  
with big handkerchiefs, and they  
a queer and slopy in the small of  
r backs. Their hands and feet was  
t of small and skinny lookin, and  
y had blue overalls and linen dusters.

He said 'twasn't their strength that  
come him, but their bein so spooky  
supernaturallike. And one of 'em  
d in a boller voice, "Little you know  
we be," and the other: "We're tak-  
your money because you don't per-  
as you should fur solemn occa-  
s. Beware in future!"

Then he got home, he cried and said  
wished he'd giv Mrs. Wiggins the  
ney for Melinda's things, but she  
it happened fortunate that her sis-  
Melinda's aunt, had sent 'her a  
sent fur her wedding.

He help now, she don't think them  
bers was supernatural, and she sez  
ver Mr. Wiggins finds out the truth  
dunno what will happen to Mrs.  
gins. I kinder think myself that  
robbers was Mrs. Wiggins and  
lindy dressed up in some old clothes,  
cotton batting wigs, and I don't  
me 'em.

Well, Melinda had her clothes after  
but before they was finished Mr.  
gins he'd got over his skeer and  
as mean as ever again, and he  
ldn't give his unfortunate wife noth-  
etry for the supper. She borried  
Tide of Fashion from the Rabbits  
found out that she'd order hev  
cken-salad.

But Mr. Wiggins, he said he was  
in his chickens, not devourin of 'em  
a, and I suppose what she had done  
re kinder weakened poor Mrs. Wig-  
gins' conscience, for, seen her own  
as was locked up, the poor soul went  
and to the neighbors and stole one  
ken apiece from each of us. It was  
der just to do it that way when she  
ht have took 'em all from one of us,  
those of us that caught her at it  
le up our minds not to say nuthin,  
jest to pray fur her, and we'd sent  
word that ef there was anything  
could do to call on us. And per-  
s she felt we'd be willin to spare  
chickens, but was proud about 'em  
fur 'em.

Well, she got the things together  
show, and she cooked the chickens  
made the salad and borried chany  
most of us and got up a real fat

rite supper and sot the table with  
flowers. They was mostly marygolds  
and old man, and some folks don't like  
the smell of neither, but the yellor  
and green looked pretty, and it was  
all ready for the company when they  
cum hum from church.

We that knowed things felt that we  
could see marks of inward torture on  
poor Mrs. Wiggins' face, and we felt to  
sympathize, fur she was nat'rally a  
moral woman and a pious one, and  
she'd been driven to sin by the mean-  
ness of her pardner. You see, she was  
one of them women that lives fur their  
children. Ef she'd been a pelican, she'd  
hev took all the feathers out of her  
buzzin to make 'em beds, and she'd  
sackerified herself fur Melindy. She  
looked kinder better when she got to  
church, but our minister he was young  
and hadn't married nobody before, and  
bein nervous, he commenced fur to  
read the burial service instead of the  
marriage service, and we, bein all stiff  
with horror, hadn't presence of mind  
enough fur to stop him until he'd actily  
buried Melindy as fur as words  
could go, and Mrs. Wiggins was in  
high strikes.

However, she got over 'em, and the  
minister he said he didn't know after  
all but it was a providence to keep us  
from bein too sot on the things of this  
world and reminded how short life was  
and went back and married 'em proper.  
And so we did get back to Wiggins',  
only, Mr. Wiggins hevbin been too mean  
to get the wagin mended, the wheel  
come off, and they was all split out and  
enamost drowneded goin over Slabside  
bridge that ain't got no railin. Mrs.  
Wiggins, poor dear, was soaked, and  
when we tuk her info our wagin she  
kept sayin, "Jedgments—jedgments—  
jedgments is comin!" We knowed what  
she was thinkin of, and we tried to  
cheer her up.

Well, when the folks was dried and  
dressed over we all went to supper, and  
we praised it up as much as we could,  
but Mrs. Wiggins sot down in her place  
like a ghost, and folks began to talk  
and laugh and help everything. But  
she didn't smile.

She passed the chicken sallad plates  
to the help, and the help gave 'em to  
the folks, and we all tasted it, but it  
didn't relish. Still we tried to eat fur  
her sake. Most of us done it, too, and  
the coffee was good, and we cheered  
up some. Mrs. Wiggins didn't eat no  
sallad herself, so she didn't know how  
it tasted. After supper we all went in-  
to the parlor and sot around, and Si  
Barker was tryin to git up dancin, and  
I did hope things would end happy,  
when all of a sudden folks began to  
look pale and say they was p'isoned.

So they seemed to be. One arter the  
other 'em took sick, and they all said  
the same thing—it was the sallad. I  
felt so poorly myself, and so did my  
Obedi. The minister had gone home  
sick, and there was a regular panic.  
There was one doctor there, and he  
sent fur 'ther, and old Miss Peebles  
said it was like old cholera tim—

it anyway, but best

In the up airs rooms expectin to die  
and feel sure it was arsenic. Mrs.  
Wiggins eared amongst us.

"Friends and feller sinners," she said,  
"we air on the pint of death, and  
here, before you all, I make confes-  
sion. I am a thief and a robber, and I  
shall never be pardoned. It was me  
that robbed my husband, and more  
than that, I stole the chickens to make  
the sallad—one of 'em from each of my  
good friends and neighbors. Jedgments  
has fallen!"

"You was driv to it, Mrs. Wiggins,"  
sez I, "by your pardner's meanness.  
We all knowed it, and none of us  
blame you."

"You don't know all," said Mrs. Wig-  
gins. "More'n that, I went to the store  
and tuk my chances and stole a bottle  
of ile. The recipe said to make the sal-  
lad dressin with ile. I'd never made  
none. I stole the bottle. Oh, I shan't  
never be forgiven, I shan't never be for-  
given! I tuk a bottle of pi'son of some  
sort, fur it was in the drug department  
where ile is kept, and I'm a murder-  
der!"

"Oh, hol!" says the doctor. "Bring me  
the bottle, Mrs. Wiggins, and I guess  
I'll find out how to cure 'em."

Mrs. Wiggins fetched it; doctor he  
tasted it.

"This ain't pi'son, ladies," sez he.  
"There ain't no great harm done, only I  
don't suppose the recipe mentioned cas-  
tor oil for sallad dressing. 'Tisn't usual  
anyhow. Nobody is goin to die this  
time. Mrs. Wiggins, unless it is you  
yourself. You lie down and quiet your-  
self."

Poor Mrs. Wiggins, she dropped on  
her knees and prayed right ther fur  
thankfulness, and we all jined in, and  
as soon as folks knowed they hadn't  
tuk arsenic they all got better. Mrs.  
Wiggins' solemn and distracted looks  
and her not eatin any had made them  
that woun't in the secret think that  
she'd gone crazy and done it a-purpose,  
which scared 'em more.

And they do say Mr. Wiggins ain't  
quite so near as he used to be since he  
saw what might come of drivin a wo-  
man into a corner for want of a penny.

Still, we shan't forget Melindy Wig-  
gins' wedding in a hurry, those of us  
that went to it.

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